

Outline

of the

History of Charkhari State.

Mata Din Trivedi.

By

MATA DIN TRIVEDI

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(*Charkhari State Service*)

“ Half is better than the whole ” Virgil

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“ Nations which often commit the inexcusable blunder of forgetting their heroes, soon sink into oblivion almost unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.”

(By the author: see Princely India: dated April 26, 1926).

INTRODUCTION

In this small booklet, I have attempted to give a faithful version of the illustrious achievements of Charkhari Raj in a concise, racy, and readable style. My aim throughout has been to unfold the glorious past to the present in order to serve as a beacon-light to the coming generations—and I shall consider my labours amply repaid if the reader is thereby induced to dig deeper in search of more precious and instructive materials out of the much neglected ruins of the ancient archives than I have been able to secure amidst all the worries of a busy official career.

The indulgent reader—I hope, will be pleased to note that the state, though not very large and prominent, is not without its own distinguishing features and peculiar interests. In a ruler of the calibre of Maharaja Chhatrasal, sincere devotion and noble patriotism ranged on a clear moral issue amply serve to rouse a corresponding echo of

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faithful enthusiasm and invincible courage on the part of his loving subjects. A model Indian ruler, and every inch a perfect gentleman—the great Maharaja has his own distinct periods of apprenticeship, activity, and renunciation in the true spirit of Hindoo dharmā. Coming later, we find Maharaja Vikramajeet Singh diagnosing the true value of the E. I. Company's alliance and friendship at a time when most of his brother chiefs are prudently balancing the expediency of siding with the Maharatta and the English powers respectively. His gallant successor—Maharaja Ratan Singh—to quote the famous Government of India despatch, shows his signal devotion and undying patriotism by “his offer to surrender to the rebels the person of his own (and only) son rather than that of a British resident who was under his protection.” A true and noble example indeed for the posterity to uphold! Maharaja Jai Singh's regime points out that Kingship—though a bed of roses in certain respects, is not without its deadly thorns.

INTRODUCTION

In Maharaja Malkhan Singh, history meets with a generous heart overflowing with milk and honey. During the great famine of 1897-98, he shows himself a true 'pater primus inter pares.' His successors are old and pious men who pass their lives nobly and devoutly. Then follows the Regency of Rao Saheb Bhan Pratap Singh Ju Deo of Jigni in 1920, the father of the present Maharaja Saheb, which lasts for more than four years. His simplicity and experience—coupled with his farsightedness and intelligence, crowns this period with a notable success and universal approval. Many of the seeds sown under his generous guidance are still in the course of germination, and a time may come when his achievements taken as a whole will reveal him as one of the most successful figures of his day. His Highness Maharaja Dhiraj Arimardan Singh Ju Deo is the true prototype of his great father. Generous and merciful to his subjects, and appreciative and indulgent towards his Sirdars, His Highness

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seems to have begun well; and it is the writer's sincere prayer to the Almighty that he may be spared many a happy summer to enjoy even greater distinctions and brighter honours than his noble and august predecessors.

6th October, 1927 }
(आश्विन शुक्र विजय दशमी) } MATA DIN TRIVEDI

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THE TRUE POSITION OF A PRINCE IN
SOCIETY

DEDICATED

Solemnly at the devout feet

of

HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJADHIRAJA SIPADARULMULK

Maharaja Arimardan Singh Ju

Deo Bahadur

by

The Author

As a humble token


of

His great regard and admiration

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN

F the two ancient Kchhatriya dynasties—Solar and Lunar, the mythological tradition fixes the former as the true fountain of the Great Rathor family whose descendants today rule over the greater part of Bundelkhand.

The brightest jewel of the Solar dynasty in its earliest stages was Maharaja Ram Chandra—King of Ayodhya. His chivalrous deeds and saintly virtues have found their most appropriate place in the pages of 'Ram Charit Manas' which, to quote V. A. Smith, 'is the tallest tree in the magic garden of Hindoo poesy.' The great Homeric works may well envy this epic where art and nature have successfully vied with one another to produce a theme in which the characters live and move with all the dignity of the Epic Age. The duties and obligations of a Kchhatriya

thoroughly defined and visualized to serve as the true foundation-stone for a stable Hindoo Society.

This period is followed by an era of darkness and uncertainty till we catch the glimpse of Kashiswar of happy memory whom political reasons and fratricidal struggles had compelled to choose Benares as his capital. Situated on the banks of the holy Ganges, this ancient and historical city of Hindoo pilgrimage still offers a degree of charm and grandeur whose captivating influences multiply according as the observer learns its traditional and sacrosanct associations with the past. But as misfortune would have it, the pious old Raja was however, soon disturbed to wage a relentless war in the cause of self-defence against the terrible and fanatic followers of Salar Maswood. Then followed in North India a period of chaos and confusion during which the Afghans drove back all the petty independent Kings of these parts to seek refuge in the wilderness of

THE ORIGIN

~~ruler have been~~ mountains and forests. The solitary crags of the great Vindhya thus became the future abode of 'the mountain nymph sweet liberty' for the brave Rathors. Here Pancham Singh—son of Beer Bahadur, subjected himself to all the rigours of a true devotee to the goddess—Brindbasini ; and finding his prayers accepted, determined to reinstate his House to its former grandeur. The auspicious name of Vindhya was immortalised in the new terminology of Vindhelkhand or the part in the neighbourhood of Vindhya and its inhabitants were called Vindhelas or more commonly Boondelas. Thus the small principality to the south of Jamna came into existence. Their followers soon multiplied with the growth of their territories, till the whole of the wide tract, now known as Bundel Khand came to acknowledge their absolute sway. Order and good Government followed the foot-steps of conquest, and the country soon entered into a glorious era of rapid transformation and speedy progress.

CHAPTER II

CHAMPAT RAI

The Philip of Bundela dynasty

DURING the 11th and 12th centuries, the Afghans in India always aspired to model their Empire on the Abbaside pattern of Damascus; but the prevalence of a strong clanish sentiment among themselves hindered them to make a fair bid for a centralized administration. The Afghan method of administration was in its later stage based on the frank recognition of "pater primus inter pares" principle. With these inherent disadvantages troubling them every now and then, distant kingdoms—like those of Bundelkhand, could well afford to shine in the heyday of prosperity and magnificence.

But the coming of the Moghals who believed in the divine theory of kingship with all its deductive multiplicities, rang the death-

bell' of these small independent kingdoms. 'A king should always be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him'—such were Akbar's own ideas whom Terry—the well-known historian, compares with a big fish in a pond which lives by swallowing her smaller compatriots. Under this heavy compact, the centrifugal force gave way before centripetal tendencies and this basic change was soon destined to reverberate even to the distant hilly tracts of Bundelkhand.

About the same time, the famous Udaya jeet, with his new strong-hold at Mahoba, was cosily engaged into numerous sanguinary and successful battles to extend his power and territory. His grandson—Raja Champat Rai, who was a contemporary of Shah Jahan, greatly distinguished himself by extending his sway to the remotest fastnesses of Bundelkhand. Covered with dense impenetrable forests, interspersed occasionally with swift mountainous streamlets ; and inhabited by a race famous for its valour and impetuous

bravery, the territory of Bundelkhand was long destined to serve as one of the Gordian knots to the Imperial ambition of Muslim conquerors. Was it not here that Bir Singh not unsuccessfully braved the Emperor Akbar's fury after his momentous murder of Abul Fazal whom the Jesuits called "the Emperor's Jonathan"?

Raja Champat, having refused to pay any tribute to Shah Jahan, invited Imperial displeasure which resulted in his being completely surrounded by the Moghal veterans at his own capital. But the wisdom, foresight, and precaution of the Raja baffled all the attempts of the Muslim invaders who—finding him a hard nut to crack, gave up the venture as hopeless and returned to the capital. Full of wrath, the Emperor sent for Baqi Khan who fared no better than his illustrious predecessor. The brave Raja then issued out from his fort, and fell upon the adjoining Imperial territories—claiming Chauth, and guaranteeing peace and protection instead. But at the height of

his fortune, Pahar Singh on whom the Raja reposed a blind trust and confidence, turned treacherous and, being in the possession of the chief pivot of his power and resources, reduced him almost to the position of a homeless wanderer. To his great grief, the Raja saw that he had only watered the thorny trees severely to gore his sides on the attainment of their maturity. In a state of agony and vexation, Champat made favourable advances to Shah Jahan but the combination of Dara Shikoh and Pahar Singh against the Raja proved an insuperable obstacle in his way. Fortunately for Champat, the Mogal throne was itself tottering to its inevitable grave and this respite gave him enough opportunity to regain his fallen prestige.

A family feud between the sons of Shah Jahan was a signal for the Raja to range himself on the side of Alamgir to avenge—if possible, the ingratitude of Dara. The brave Bundela greatly distinguished himself in the battle-field of Samugarh, and was there-

fore subsequently honoured by Aurangzeb with a mansab of 12,000 men, and an extensive Jagir in Bundelkhand free of revenue. But the suspicious and over cautious nature of Alamgir was greatly stirred when the Raja was asked to accompany Bahadur Khan against the advancing army of Shuja in the spirit of an Imperial subaltern to which the incensed chief replied—"I resign the mansab, abandon the alliance, and the service of the Emperor." The Imperial wrath blazed forth, and a series of invasions beginning with that of Soobh Karan and Banka reopened the chapters of rapine and bloodshed in the Raja's realm. Baffled on all sides, a constant prey to treachery and ingratitude, this founder of Bundela greatness—enshrined in the memories of a reverential nation, met his death by his sword point leaving the work of further conquest and consolidation to his worthy son—Maharaja Chhatrasal.

CHAPTER III

MAHARAJA CHHATRASAL


(बुन्देला वंश शिरोमणि)

*Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our life sublime.*

*And departing leave behind us
Foot-prints on the sands of Time.*

H. W. Longfellow

I. AS A PRINCE

 HHATRAPRAKASH—a poetic treatise, written by Gore Lall—the courtly bard of Maharaja Chhatrasal, forms a most fascinating as well as an instructive study. No student of Bundelkh and history can afford to neglect a work so original and yet so unique. This contemporary eulogist has most successfully painted with the brush of publicity the thrilling narratives and marvellous

activities of his Royal patron. Had it not been for the comparative paucity of historical materials, the figure of this far-famed Maharaja would have blazoned more the real founder of Bundelkhand greatness in his true perspective.

The child is the father of man. Kunwar Chhatrasal, while yet in his teens, evinced remarkable indications of a strong intellect and sturdy temperament, was said to be unrivalled in the use of the match-lock, spear-sword, dagger, stiletto, battle-axe, bow and arrow, and other war like weapons. Amply gifted with mental and corporeal endowments, in him every accomplishment found an appropriate response. He knew only too well what the times required, and was not the man to count its cost.

The religious persecution of the hindoos and the demolition of their holy shrines threatened to engulf the vast Moghal Empire into the mire of utter destruction. Complete religious and social autonomy which was one

of the chief cardinal stones on which the Moghal statesmen had based the foundations of their heterogeneous Empire, was unfortunately made the chief sphere of interference by the orthodox interpreters of the holy Koran during the long chequered reign of Alamgir. The grand Imperial edifice was largely cemented by the bluest Rajpoot blood, and some of the noblest Hindoo intellects had been ungrudgingly placed at the disposal of the Moghal Emperors. But the accession of Alamgir was a signal for universal revolt. Shivajee and Chhatrasal sprang up on the scene to lead the discontented mass of persecuted Hindoos. It was virtually the case of Cromwell leading "the New Model" or the Duke of Wellington inspiring a bleeding Europe in his historic struggles against Bonaparte.

Kunwar Chhatrasal was still in his teens when the strong hand of death had suddenly removed the angelic hands of his father to reduce him to the sad position of a King without a Kingdom. The undaunted Kunwar

—seeing no other course open to him, joined the army of Raja Jai Singh, the governor of the Deccan in order to serve the necessary period of apprenticeship in the use of arms. The Deccan Raja—an old friend of Champat Rai, utilized his services in chastising a rebel satrap—named Kooran Kool, where the Bundela hero greatly distinguished himself. It is believed that about this time, Chhatrasal was married to a Panwar princess at Delwara—near Deogarh. Soon after Bahadur Khan, an Imperial general, marched to besiege the fortress of Deogarh; and joined hands with Chhatrasal and Kooka at the head of a powerful army despatched by Raja Jai Singh for his assistance. Chhatrasal dismayed the friend and foe alike by his skill and intrepidity in storming the fortress; but in Bahadur's jealous heart, his universal recognition as the chief hero of the day bred malice and ill-will. Being informed of this, he left the Moghal Camp in sheer disgust as if an Adam had warned him in the famous Shakesperean verses:—

“What, my young master ? O! my gentle-master. O my sweet master.....Why are you so virtuous? why do people love you? And wherefore, you are gentle, strong, and valiant.....
Know you not, master, to some kind of men their graces serve them but as enemies? No more do yours: your virtues, gentlemaster, are sanctified and holy traitors to you.

O! what a world is this, when what is comely envenoms him that bears it.”

Infuriated at their ingratitude and deeply moved by the demolition of Hindoo temples by Imperial firmans, Chhatrasal next marched to join Maharaja Shiwajee who had already unfurled the banner of revolt against the Moghals. But the rebel Raja—on hearing the victorious exploits of the youth, advised him in these words :—

“ Illustrious Chief! conquer and subdue your foes ! resume and rule your native land ! destroy the Emperor’s army ! slay the Turks, and the Moghals, and trust not that deceitful

race. And whenever they evince an intention of attacking you, I will distract their attention and subvert their plans by active co-operation. When they opposed us, Shree-Maharanee Bhawani came to our aid: confiding in her favour and protection, I fear no Muslim power. Numerous were the nobles of that deceitful race by whom I was assailed, on whom I tried the temper of my blade and whom I slew. Return then to your native land, levy an army, expel the invaders, grasp the sword and Kanhaiyajee will protect you in the day of battle: for does not Chhatri faith consist in protecting the cow and the Brahmans, in guarding the Vedas, in showing skill and valour in battle? And if you lose your life, will you not through the solar orb enter the mansions of bliss, enjoying plenitude of happiness and repose? If victorious, you will repossess your country and immortalize your name. If in this quarter, you attack the enemy, the fame of the deed will be mine. It is, therefore, expedient to com-

mence hostilities in your own dominions, where your reputation will gain many adherents, success will crown your efforts, and your glory and renown remain emblazoned in the annals of time."

Just about this time, the orthodox interpreters of holy Koran were seriously thinking to bring the ominous fire of religious fanaticism within the peaceful borders of Bundelkhand. Fidaee Khan was the bearer of an Imperial mandate to the effect that "in the city of Orchha, the Hindoos practised the rites of idolatory, sounding the Shunkh, ringing bells, making offerings to the names of deceased ancestors, putting marks on their foreheads, wearing necklaces, and conducting themselves with pride, contumely and presumption; and that by the toleration of such rites infidelity remained in the world, that the sound of the Shunkh prevented Mohamadans going to heaven, and that it had therefore become expedient to suppress those customs, and to decree that their temples

should be destroyed; and mosques built on their sites; that if the temples were new or repaired, their upper parts should be demolished, and minarets erected, in order that they might become mosques for Mohamadan worship: that Mullas should be appointed to read in them the glorious Koran, pray morning and evening with a loud voice, and that Qazees should be nominated for the administration of justice; for with the equity of Qazee, God is well pleased."

The moment for supreme sacrifice had come. Times and circumstances both pointed out towards Chhatrasal as the proper man for the hour. The young Bundela too determined to catch the tide of opportunity at its flood, and forthwith repaired to Aurangabad to unfold his designs to his faithful counsellor—Bir Buldao, who eagerly fell in with his project. Both then approached Rutunshah—an elder brother of Chhatrasal, to plead with him the necessity of shouldering the responsibilities of a war-lord by lead-

ing the fiery Bundelas against the threatening Imperial armies. Not agreeing with this project of the du-umvirate, Ratan Shah replied :—" Contemplate my brother, the unnumbered troops, the immense wealth, the unlimited power of the Emperor ; contrast them with your feeble means of opposition, and think how you will be able to do these things. Where is your army? Where are your resources? Who have you to aid and defend you ? "

To this, the young Chhatrasal gave a momentous reply worthy to be written in golden letters—" My protector is Almighty. He will assist and defend me : for when His servant treads the path of peril, he is guarded by an invisible protector ; and while he sleeps exposed to danger, He, who never slumbers, watches at his head. He knows our secret thoughts, conveys a knowledge of future events, and gives power and strength of mind to those who trust in Him, to form and execute great designs. I have perfect confidence and

faith in God ; the fountain of bounty, the source of all miracles. He who rules and governs the life and mind of man will enable me to accomplish the design which His wisdom has instilled.”

There was no time to be lost, and Chhatrasal was forthwith elected the Maharaja by the admiring acclamations of all his countrymen. Future events amply showed how far this choice was wise.

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II. AS A MAHARAJA

FRANCE, in the last quarter of the 17th century, was universally recognized as the dominant power in Christendom. Henry IV—like the great Akbar, had wisely granted religious toleration to the Protestants, and Richelieu had suppressed the feudal tyranny of France with an iron hand. There were ample signs of peace and prosperity, and the country was universally recognized as the wealthiest power in Europe. But the accession of Lewis XIV brought a begotting and narrow-minded monarch at the helm of the state affairs who, though without gratitude and without pity, insane in his pride, insatiable in his vanity, and brutal in his selfishness, amply possessed the rare virtues of industry, patience, quickness of resolve, firmness of purpose, capacity for discerning greatness and

using it, and above all an immense self-belief and self-confidence.

Our great Emperor—Alamgir, controlling the destinies of the vast Moghal Empire at the same time and almost under similar circumstances, could not have aspired to be depicted in more truthful colours. The fanatical and overcentralized policy of Lewes in the Netherlands brought forward William—prince of Orange, a man of fiery and commanding temper, immovable courage, and a political ability of the highest order who had firmly resolved to ‘die in the last ditch’ in his historic struggles against the soaring ambitions, unlimited means, and insatiable pride of the great French monarch. It was with a similar heart and mind under parallel circumstances that Maharaja Chhatrasal—like his great protagonist, Shivajee, manfully launched his tiny bark in the stormy whirlwind of Moghal tyranny.

Mohammad Hashim Khan, one of the

seasoned Moghal veterans, began the game by attacking the Raja with a large army. True to his guerilla system of warfare, the latter feigned retreat and thus drawing upon him a large host of disorderly pursuers, turned round to inflict a crushing defeat upon the enemy. The subjugated parts, round about Malwa, agreed to pay ' Chauth ' to Chhatrasal to ensure peace and protection from any further molestation. The next serious conflict took place between him and Kesho Rai—the famous Zamindar of Bansa who would not tolerate to wear the badge of honourable subordination offered by the triumphant Maharaja. Consolidation of the subjugated parts with a view to make a further advance necessitated the Bundela hero not to leave this powerful satrap sulking sullenly behind. After a tough struggle, the Maharaja defeated and killed him. His young son, however, was magnanimously treated by the chivalrous conqueror with all the dignity and consideration befitting his rank and position.

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The strong fortress of Gwalior was to be his next target of attack. Its valiant governor—Saiyad Munauwar—joined hands with Ananda and Mohammad Hashim near the southern banks of Jumna with a view to intercept the onward march of the triumphant Bundela. Though their mission was not completely crowned with success, but for certain unknown reasons the Raja desisted from marching straight towards the fort of Gwalior. He arrived at Hanutek where a large assemblage of Bundelas, Panwars, and Dhandheras greeted his nuptial ceremony which was celebrated with great eclat and enthusiasm. But hardly had these rejoicings subsided when Aurangzeb despatched Tahauwar Khan with 30,000 men to prostrate the lofty pretensions of his valiant foe.

After many attempts, the Moghal Khan returned baffled and crestfallen. The Maharaja took Kalinjar and stormed Kalpi, extending his dominion including Kalpi in the North to Saugor in the South, and from Kalinjar

on the East to Bhelsa on the west—with Mau-Mahewa as his capital.

Little surprise need be felt at this unbroken record of Maharaja Chhatrasal's victories over the sundry detachments of Mogh'al forces. The guerilla system of warfare was organized by this brave and resourceful Maharaja to the highest pitch of frightful perfection which repeated all the episodes of the Maharattas and Spaniards when pitted against the armies of Alamgir and Napoleon respectively. The boorish policy of religious persecution by the Moghals in this heterogeneous country made the cause of territorial independence co-terminous with religious freedom. The Moghal army too at this time presented a very sad spectacle. Readers of Babar's charming memoirs disconsolately rub their eyes at the impressions handed down by Bernier and other contemporary writers about Aurangzeb's army. The victor of Panipat whose scarred veterans numbering about 12,000 effectives in all, scattered a lac of

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Ibrahim's men within 6 hours, would never have condescended to lead the pale-faced generals sitting cosily within their palanquins and cowardly mercenary soldiers of Aurangzeb's army whose vigour and energy had completely oozed out in this Capua of the Orient where effeminate luxury had invaded all the ranks with such disastrous results. In points of personal bravery, Aurangzeb was a true representative of the house of Taimur. Gibbon's historical cycle had made a complete round, and the centripetal forces of the Empire had at last given way before centrifugal tendencies.

III. THE LAST DAYS

BY the year 1707, Alamgir's strong hand was silenced in the tomb of death. Both expediency and experience demanded that the accession of Bahadur Shah on the Moghal throne should be followed by a treaty of mutual alliance and friendship between him and Maharaja Chhatrasal. The veteran Maharaja was invited to the Imperial Court and was requested to add one more feather in his crown by the speedy reduction of Lohagarh fortress which had effectively withstood all the martial impacts of Moghal resources. Accompanied by his loyal band, Chhatrasal breached the walls, knocked the gates, and stormed the fortress to the great consternation and bewilderment of the enemy. Thence he repaired to the Moghal Court where he was duly received with all the pomp and splendour befitting his rank and position. On the ad-

visability of receiving a suitable mansab as a mark of his splendid victory, the Raja pointed out to the Emperor that he already owned a country yielding annually two crores of rupees, and possessing rich diamond mines. He, however, assured the Emperor of his unwavering friendship and returned back to his own capital leaving one of his sons at the Imperial Court.

No account of this great Maharaja can be regarded complete which intentionally or unintentionally attempts to side-track his momentous 'darshan' of Parn Nath Pribhoo.

This sage hailed from the province of Gujrat and, after making a wide detour through the prominent places of Northern India, was greeted by Maharaja Chhatrasal at his own capital who afterwards became his true and ardent devotee. Historical enquiries—though not quite complete, amply reveal that the 'Guru' aimed more or less to harmonise the diverse and warring pretensions of two great

religious sects of India under the eclectic shadow of an all-pervading unity in the true spirit of Soofi and Vedantic principles. His views have found an appropriate expression in the interesting pages of 'Kulzum' said to have been written by or under the personal guidance of the great Prabhoo. The great Hindoo God—Lord Krishna, sings on his sweet and charming lute vibrating distinctly through every cadence of its theme to enliven the fulsome hearts of His pious devotees. The Guru's comrade-in-arms are to-day known as 'Sathi Bhai' with their headquarters in Surat and Panna. Like a true Kchhatriya, Maharaja Chhatrasal was passing his old age in such pure and holy environments, because the 'yogic' spirit of contentment and eternal bliss—perhaps the richest and rarest product of Hindoo culture and civilization, was deeply ringing the sound:—

Here they lie, had realms and lands
 Who now want strength to stir their hands
 Where from their pulpit sealed with dust

They say—"In greatness is no trust."

But the pin-pricks of Mohammad Khan Bangash of Moradabad—with his reputed general Dalel Khan, who had carved out an independent career for himself during the loud crash of the Moghal Empire, roused the old Maharaja to summon the Maharatta Peishwa to come promptly to his aid thus:

जो बीती गजराज पै सो बीती अब आय ।

बाजी जात बुन्देल की, राखौ बाजी राय ॥

In response to this fraternal invitation, the Maharatta bayonets were soon witnessed bristling through Bundelkhand territories to shatter the insolent pretensions of Bangash; and rescued Maharaja Chhatrasal from the grips of a vigilant foe. As a mark of its solemn recognition, Bajee Rao was allowed a dominion consisting of the districts of Saugor, Jhansi, Sironj, Goonah, Gurh-Kotah, and Hridaya Nagar yielding a revenue approximating to Rs. 30,76,953-1-1. The rest was divided between his two sons—Hridaya Shah

MAHARAJA CHHATRASAL

and Jagat Raj with Panna and Jaitpur respectively as their head-quarters.

Maharaja Chhatrasal passed away at the advanced age of 82. Making a fairly large allowance for the courtly panegyrics of bardic literature—the grand figure of this immortal founder of Bundela greatness wins sincere applause even from the staunchest critic of hero-worship. It may, therefore, not be unpardonable if the writer's pen lingers long enough over the epoch making figure of one of the greatest men of his age.

CHAPTER IV

(a) MAHARAJA JAGAT RAJ (1732-1738)

GHHATRASAL had bequeathed to his second son—Maharaja Jagat Raj the state of Jaitpur which contained Bho-ndagarh, Bursa, Ajaigarh, Rungurh, Jaitpur, Charkhari and others, and was presumed to yield an annual income of about Rs. 30,76,953 (*vide* Asiatic Annual Register 1809). The young Maharaja did not at all prove himself unequal to the newly entrusted charge. The perennial tide of Muslim conquest had already begun to drench Bundela shores. It did not proceed from any gregarious lust of Imperial expansion but was solely actuated by personal and selfish motives of intractable omrahs who, having sliced the falling fragments of the mighty Moghal corpse, were ready to gorge themselves even more at the cost of neighbouring infidels. The true embodiment

MAHARAJA JAGAT RAJ

of such a spirit was Mohammad Khan Bangash—Nawab of Farrukhabad. With Dalel Khan as his general, he was determined to see the complete destruction—nay utter annihilation, of Jaitpur Raj.

The terrible onslaught took place at the battle of Nadpureea where both the parties explored all the possible avenues of bravery, skill, and supreme generalship. It was a well-contested battle, but the overwhelming numbers of the enemy told in the end. Jagat Raj lay wounded on the field, and Rao Ram Singh of Sugra was killed in the fight. But the bravery of Ranee Amar Kunwar eased the situation, for she—like a true Rajpoot lady, pierced through the ranks of the sullen enemy and reclaimed her wounded peer.

Skirmishes then became the order of the day. At last finding himself harassed by the license of Muslim soldiery and his resources unequal to that of the enemy, the Raja invited the Peishwa to come to his rescue. The response was immediate and the Maharatta

bayonets effectively curbed the growing ambitions of the Nāwab. For the remaining few years of his life, Jagat Raj reigned in peace and prosperity, and breathed his last in 1758 with the fond hope that Ranee Amar Kunwar's grandson, the son being dead in his father's life-time, would be his successor.

(b) MAHARAJA PAHAR SINGH (1758-1765).

Pahar Singh was a son of Jagat Raj, but was not entitled to succeed his father as after the heroic feat of Ranee Amar Kunwar at Nadpureea, her eldest born son was to be singled out to inherit the gaddi after the death of his grand father. But territorial ambitions rarely brook such an inconvenient pretension; and Pahar Singh was more than a match for his younger nephews. Having given them a wide berth, Pahar Singh sent for a Brahman named Mathur Sen, and formally ascended the masnad. Guman Singh was naturally furious at this audacity of Pahar Singh, and commenced a predatory warfare against the


usurper, spreading ruin and desolation to the very gates of Jaitpur. At last near Soopah, the two brothers were severely defeated and driven out of the neighbouring territories. The fugitives, however, enlisted the support of Nawab Nujf Khan Bahadur to their cause, but even this combination fared no better. Victorious in field, Pahar Singh remained in unmolested possession of his Raj till his death; but in order to avoid any possibility of future bloodshed after his death between his own sons and those of Ranee Amar Kunwar, he wrote to Guman Singh and Khuman Singh—inviting them to come to him with all possible speed, as he felt his mortal career drawing to a close and wished before he died, to divide the country of the late Maharaja Jagat Raj so as to give entire satisfaction to all contending parties. Accordingly, along with others, Maharaja Khuman Singh was given Charkhari Raj—a tract yielding annually about 9 lacs 25 thousand rupees.

PART II

CHAPTER I

MAHARAJA KHUMAN SINGH

(1765—1782)

HE year 1765 will ever be regarded as a red-letter day in the history of British rule in India. It was in this very year that Hon'ble the East India Railway Company—under the noble inspiration of Lord Clive, accepted the privileges of Diwanee or right to the collection of taxes in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa at the hands of the Emperor Shah Alam. Signs were not wanting to the effect that the country had by now definitely accepted the new mandate issuing from an occidental Kingdom, and was prepared to develop its art and literature under the progressive inspiration of a power which had already proved herself to be the peer of the European continent. It was perhaps destined that in this way the most richly gifted parts of Asia

and Europe would combine to work out the grandiloquent future of international harmony and to mould the warring fragments of diverse nationalities into a compact and united whole. Verily, the first seeds of the much desired league of nations were thus thrown on the rich Indian Soil.

Providence had so ordained that in the same year, Maharaja Khuman Singh would lay the foundations of Charkhari Raj. Though disproportionate, the coincidence of these two events unmistakably showed that even the precarious wheels of fortune willed these two to remain inalienable and devoted friends for ever. Ever true to the inner promptings of this divine manifestations, the Charkhari Darbar worthily showed its colours during the great mutiny of 1857, and every day finds only an additional fervour and eagerness to continue this bond of love and suzerain regard.

The historic name of Charkhari is said to be derived from "Chakrapuri" (चक्रपुरी).

Situated between $24^{\circ}44'$ and $25^{\circ}37'$ North Latitude and between $79^{\circ}23'$ and $80^{\circ}40'$ East Longitude, the state covers an area of about 880 square miles. Smiling alluvial fields have bred a race of prosperous and contented peasantry who are fully alive to the extreme dotage of natural gifts harmoniously co-ordinated by a system of mild and efficient administration.

It was here that Khuman Singh laid the historic foundations of Charkhari Raj. His short reign of 17 years (1765—82) opened up a new chapter in the state's development. In his "History of India as told by its own historians", Elliot informs us how Karamat Khan and Himmat Bahadur invaded Bundelkhand at the head of a large force. The raid was probably undertaken in connection with the policy of territorial aggrandizement decided on by Shujaudaulah of Oudh and Emperor Shah Alam, which was doomed to be shattered before the guns of Major Hector Monroe at the field of Buxar in 1764. The

invaders for a time being, carried everything before them, till they were effectively checkmated by a combined army of all Bundelkhand states at the field of Mungas—some 12 miles away from Banda. Patriotism and unity—in the cause of virtue and self-sacrifice at last won the day, and the noble descendants of Maharaja Chhatrasal once more vindicated their honour and bravery before the terrible onslaught of an impudent foe. Raja Khuman Singh too subscribed his own full quota of bravery and coolness in this deathless heroism which saved the independence of Bundelkhand.

In the later part of his reign, Khuman Singh was compelled to have a resort to arms against his elder brother—Raja Gooman Singh of Ajaigarh. It so happened that the Ajaigarh chief—having no issue of his own, wanted his nephew, Kunwar Vijay Bahadur, to be nominated for succession as he thought his mortal career drawing to a close. The brave Kunwar forthwith repaired to the court

of Ajaigarh at the call of the Raja's summons. But alas! insignificant thorns sometimes prove to be most serious obstacles, and an unprincipled and selfish schemer turns out to be a granite rock on which all the fond hopes and ideals of a wise ruler find themselves hopelessly crushed. Safdal Singh—for he was no other—a past master in the art of creating dissensions and bad blood, craftily approached the young prince with these sugar-coated words:—'Prince! when your uncle heard of your arrival, he said how restless Lallu is for his Tilak.' These pregnant words of the cunning courtier had their desired effect upon the immature mind of the prince who began to suspect the true bonafides of the dying Raja. Safdal thence triumphantly returned to the Raja saying—"Maharaj! your nephew wonders, how you still breathe." This greatly incensed the old Raja who implicitly, though unfortunately, believed in every word of his crooked courtier. Safdal's wiles were thus completely successful in creating hope-


less differences between two brotherly states.

The Rajpoot blood having thus been roused, a mutual appeal was made to sword as the final arbiter of rival claims which peaceful persuasions had failed to accomplish. Arjun Singh Panwar, leading the Ajaigarh forces, met Maharaja Khuman Singh at the battle of Panrori. In the course of battle, the Charkhari Chief was struck by a cannon-ball which prostrated him down upon the field. Soon after he expired—leaving the throne to his son Maharaja Vijay Bahadur (1782).

CHAPTER II

MAHARAJA VIKRMAJEET SINGH

(1782—1829)

 HE victor of Panrori—None Arjun Singh Panwar of Ajaigarh, was decidedly one of the greatest personalities of his day. He was a brave man, a born general, and a very coolheaded diplomatist; but the gold in him was not without an alloy. It was his intense passion for bloody wars—fought in the best interests of self-aggrandizement that was mainly responsible in enormously weakening the military resources of Bundelkhand, where after the tragic occurrences at Panrori and Bhatewra; discord, disunity, and chaos reigned supreme to the great delight and satisfaction of the neighbouring Maharatta powers. The pathetic figure of Arjun Singh can never be placed among the distinguished galaxy of nation-builders;

and when subjected to a critical analysis, reveals some of the out-standing traits of the last German Emperor who lighted the torch of European conflagration to satisfy his all consuming ambitions at world-domination. To his great grief, he could neither please God nor Mammon.

The young Maharaja of Charkhari continued to make head against Ajaigarh forces. Arjun Singh soon invested the historic fortress of Mangalgarh where the Raja had concentrated all his shattered resources in defence. But in the midst of the struggle, his courage gave way and he went away to Jhansi. It now devolved upon the devoted Bhagwanta Huzoori, the renowned captain of the fort at this time, to vindicate the honour and bravery of Charkhari forces in broad daylight.

At this time Bhagwanta is credited to have given a most spirited reply to the intoxicated bluffs of Arjun Singh, and succeeded in driving out the overweening invaders

from the borders of the state.

It had so happened that Ali Bahadur, a grandson of the Peishwa through a Musulman concubine named Mustani, joined hands with Raja Himmat Bahadur, the spiritual head and the military leader of a large body of Goshains, to invade Bundelkhand. When Shujauddaulah of Oudh was defeated at Buxar where Raja Himmat Bahadur commanded a division, the latter relinquishing the nawab's subordination, entered Bundelkhand to profit by the reign of anarchy and confusion prevalent over here. Raja Vijay Bahadur joined the twin invaders in order to secure himself from the attacks of Arjun Singh. A battle was fought between Nowgong and Ajaigarh where the triple allies defeated Arjun Singh and later cut off his head. Soon after Maharaja Vijay Bahadur, on entering into engagements of fidelity and allegiance, received from Ali Bahadur a 'sanad' for Charkhari fort and the adjoining territory, yielding an annual income of about

4 lacs a year. But as misfortune would have it, Ali Bahadur died in 1802, and the Peishwa at once declared himself the Suzerain power for Bundelkhand as well. By Wellesly's treaty with Scindhia at this time, the Hon'ble Company had acquired a foot-hold in Bundelkhand and thus came into direct contact with the many chiefs holding straggling positions in the province.

But Malhar Rao Holkar and Daulat Rao Scindhia who had practically cut off their allegiance from the Peishwas of Poona, were seriously contemplating the feasibility of an invasion in Bundelkhand. Being a buffer state between the English and the Maharrattas at that time, Bundelakhand attracted the same amount of attention from the Government of Lord Mornington which is given in modern times to the small country of Afghanistan or was the proud privilege of Armenia in the hey-day of the Roman-Empire. With Scindhia and Holkar thundering at the gates of Bundelakhand, Raja Vijay Bahadur

set the noble example of throwing his lot, with the Company's Government, and established the reputation of Charkhari as being the first Sanad State in Bundelakhand which frankly and unhesitatingly embraced the English cause in the very teeth of bitter and powerful foes (1804) at a time when every other state was wavering with indecision. On the 2nd September 1804, Maharaja Vijay Bahadur became the proud recipient of the following Sanad granted by Hon'ble the E. I. Co's government. It ran as follows:—
 "Where as the province of Bundelkhand has lately been annexed to the territories and possessions of the British government in India, and the British troops are now employed in the punishment and suppression of the disaffected and the turbulent in this province; and whereas Maharaja Beekurmajeet, Vijay Bahadur, who is one of the ancient and rightful possessors of a portion of territory in Bundelkhand, having sincerely professed his submission and obedience to the Government

of the Honourable Company, has entered into and transmitted to the British government under his signature and seal, a written obligation of allegiance and fidelity consisting of seven distinct Articles, by all which he is bound to abide :

Therefore and with a view to the protection and security of the ancient rights and possessions of the native chiefs of this country, which is the just and benevolent principle of the British Government in India uniformly to support and protect, the undermentioned 'Talukas' and 'Mahals' with the villages and small fortresses belonging to them, yielding a gross revenue of 4 lacs four hundred and eighty-eight rupees, which were formerly held by the ancestors of Maharaja Beekurmajeet Vijay Bahadur and are now in his possession, are granted and secured to him and to his heirs and successors, to be held under the British Government on the terms and conditions which are specified in his obligation of allegiance ; and it is hereby stipulated

and agreed that so long as Raja Bejay Bahadur shall strictly adhere to the terms of his obligation and shall practise implicit submission and obedience to the will of the British Government, he shall not be molested in the possession of the under-mentioned talookas and forts. 2nd September 1804.”

Another Sanad—granted to the Maharaja on 25th March 1811—after the settlement of the dispute regarding certain villages which had been omitted from that of 1804, was to the following effect:—“Be it known to chowkidars, kanoongos etc., of the pargannahs of Raath, and Sewndah and Katolla etc., in the province of Bundelkhand, that.

Whereas the Raja Beekurmajeet Bejay Bahadur, one of the ancient and hereditary chiefs of Bundelkhand, on the annexation of the province of Bundelkhand to the dominions of the British Government was the first of Bundela chiefs, who submitted and ac-

knowledgeed the authority of that Government, and during the agency of Captain John Baillie, the former Agent to the Governor-General, delivered in an Ikrarnamah (or obligation of allegiance) to the British Government, and received a sanad for the villages and lands in his possession, and has from that period remained firm and faithful to every article of his engagement, and in no instance deviated or swerved from that obedience, loyalty, and attachment due to the British Government; several villages belonging to the share and possessions of the said Rajah that were then in the possession of unjust claimants, and the right to which at that period had not been investigated, remained in the hands of those unjust claimants, and were not included in the Sanad before mentioned on account of the above described villages, which were not included as stated in the said Sanad, disputes and quarrels existed, and half of the talook of Kurelah, which was inserted in the sanad received

from Captain J. Baillie by the said Rajah, was resumed by the British Government along with the 'Jaidad' of Raja Himmut-Bahadoor. During the agency of Mr. John Richardson—Agent to the Governor-General, after minute investigation the said Rajah was put in possession of the villages and lands withheld from him by several unjust claimants and the Rajah aforesaid received a deduction from the revenues of the tuppah of Chandellah in lieu of the half share of Kurelah; and the disputes and claims that existed between the said Rajah and the other chiefs of Bundelkhand have been all adjusted. This being the case, a rectified Sanad and an Ikrar Namah being thought necessary, the said Rajah has accordingly, at this period, delivered in an Ikrarnamah, containing eleven distinct articles, and required a Sanad for villages and lands now in his possession. Therefore the villages and lands enumerated in the subjoined schedule are granted to the said Rajah and his heirs, with all their rights

CHAPTER II

and usages, their land revenue and sayer, forts and fortifications exempt from the payment of Revenue to the British Government in perpetuity. So long as the said Rajah, and his heirs and successors shall observe and remain faithful to the several articles of Ikrarnamah 'that he has delivered in, no molestation or resumption of his possessions hereby granted shall take place on the part of the British Government. It is necessary that you all consider and account the said Rajah Lord and Proprietor of the possessions in question, and the conduct that is incumbent on the said Rajah is to exert himself to the utmost to increase the cultivation, and to improve his possessions by promoting the prosperity and comfort of the inhabitants, and to enjoy the produce of his good governance in obedience and loyal attachment to the British Government.

Ratified by the Honourable the Vice-President of the Council of India on the 19th April 1811."

MAHARAJA VIKRMAJEET SINGH

After having duly settled his affairs with the English, Maharaja Vijay Bahadur next turned his attention to the improvement of his administration with a view to inaugurate an era of settled repose. But some of the wicked courtiers whom the simple and uncompromising honesty and patriotism of Bhagwanta Huzoori—the famous hero and defender of Mangal Garh against Nane Arjun Singh, were the greatest eye-sores, plotted to remove the faithful charioteer by cunning guile and shameful artifice. The unsuspecting Raja fell into their snares, and woefully administered deadly hemlock to the renowned ‘kiledar’ under the pretence of a friendly drink. Bhagwant read through the Raja’s designs, but heroically scorned death at the hands of his royal, though erring, patron. Few examples will bear comparison with the noble and generous attitude assumed by the ‘kiledar’ at that fateful hour—swallowing the bitter cup of hemlock, but exhorting his friends and followers ever to remain true and loyal to the Charkhari Gaddi.

CHAPTER II

The Raja was a very mild and pious administrator, but his chequered reign always suffered from the grave canker of financial stringency. The administrative machinery was of the most elementary type, and the convenient though pernicious, system of giving out contracts to sundry individuals with a view to farm out the state income was mostly preferred. What wonder if it resulted into creating a class of 'publicani' who, like the good old days of the Roman Empire, gorged themselves both at the expense of the state as well as its peaceful Subjects. Even an honest Lucullus was no proof against the growing evil, for the administrative deadlock required a Julius Caesar to place the grand edifice in order.

The Maharaja had three legitimate sons—one of whom, Pooran Mal being a prodigy both in strength and valour. His 'tega,' with other weapons, was exhibited at the Calcutta International Exhibition, and Maharaja Malkhan Singh—the then ruling chief, received


a first class certificate and a medal. But as misfortune would have it, all the three sons of Vijay Bahadur dropped one by one during the life-time of their father. In 1822, his grand Son—Kunwar (afterwards Maharaja) Ratan Singh, was recognized as the Raja's successor, and was formally admitted to have entered into all the rights granted by the sanads of 1804 and 1811.

The interesting career of Maharaja Vijay Bahadur closed in the year 1829. A wise politician, an erudite scholar, the author of 'Vikrama-Virdawali' and 'Harbhakt-Bilas' and the ruler of a 'sanad' state in Bundelkhand first to enter into a friendly treaty with Hon'ble the E.I. Co., the figure of this Hindoo prince lends a peculiar charm to the most unstable and pregnant period in the Bundelkhand annals.

CHAPTER III

MAHARAJA RATAN SINGH

(1829—1860)

HEN Vikrmajeet Singh gave up his ghost in 1829, his grandson and successor—Maharaja Ratan Singh was still in his teens; and hence Diwan Madan Singh—by the will of the late Chief, was entrusted with the responsibilities of state administration together with the proper training of the minor Maharaja for an early realization of the rights and obligations of a virtuous ruler. For a period of about 6 years, Diwan Madan Singh held the reins of Government in his own hands, and made himself notoriously conspicuous by stuffing nearly all the higher posts by his own favourite creatures. When the Maharaja passed his 20th year, the golden chains of inactivity began to gall his sturdy patience severely. The demission of

the old charioteer had to be effected, but like Bismark and Bairam Khan, Diwan Madan Singh had become too much enamoured of supreme power and dignity to hand over the state administration into the regal hands of the budding rose.

History repeats itself. Dip Kunwar Ju of Datia—the valiant daughter of Maharaja Vijay Bahadur, at last came to the rescue of the young chief. The masterful Diwan was forced to fly for his dear life, and the whole system of his injurious cobweb was sturdily brushed off. Dark clouds having been forcibly removed from the sky, the energetic and young luminary began to shine with all his splendour and brightness to give light and warmth to its pious devotees.

Where there is will, there is way. The young Raja, seriously anxious to overhaul the component parts of the administrative machinery secured the services of an able and ripe administrator in the person of Diwan

Anna Saheb Gore, (1853) whom he trusted implicitly. Trust begets trust which, in its own turn, results into administrative harmony and happiness of the subjects. The intelligent Diwan soon brought order out of chaos and patched up many a hole in the financial decrepitude. After making this very wise selection, Maharaja Ratan Singh gradually raised himself to that position of a constitutional ruler where some of the outstanding advantages of the system of ministerial responsibility could be thoroughly reaped. A constitutional sovereign "reigns but does not govern."

But there is many a slip, twixt the cup and the lip. The state was not long destined to witness the peaceful promulgation of beneficial reforms, for the discontented magazine of Indian sepoy had contracted an ominous spark in the Meerut Cantonment. The sepoy Mutiny of 1857 which was but a characteristic phase of the determined and vigorous protest of 'the old order yielding place to

new ' only served to cement the mutual relations of the Indians and Englishmen more firmly than ever by distinctly pointing them out a common aim and a common goal. In the oft-quoted words of Lord Curzon:—"We are ordained to walk here in the same track together for many a long day to come. You can not do without us. We should be impotent with you." A small and fast-dwindling section of die-hard opinion proved powerless before the onward march of time, and the ghost of change in regions scientific, industrial, political, and social became henceforth an essential factor of abiding influence.

Disloyal and predatory elements found Charkhari a wall of adamant which could not be pierced by any number of cunning shafts, manufactured by all the ingenuous and destructive craft of Tantiya Topi—a notorious rebel captain marching up from Jubbulpore to strengthen the hands of Jhansi insurgents. While on his way, Tantiya made a deadly halt under the very walls of Charkhari to

punish its Maharaja for having so signally and heroically chosen the English Cause against tremendous odds.

On the out-break of Mutiny, the Maharaja had unhesitatingly accepted the grave responsibility of administering adjoining British parganas of Hamirpur. The rebellious Rani of Jaitpur who had unfurled the banner of revolt against the English supremacy, was promptly punished and thus a grave situation was happily averted. Mr. Carne, the Chief Executive Officer of Mahoba along with many other distracted refugees, found Mangalgarh fortress a veritable and most hospitable oasis in a vast desert, teeming with wild—though humanelements of barbarity and incendiarism.

The loyal and energetic Maharaja strengthened the fortress and determined to make a gallant resistance against the blood-thirsty rebel who had the disgraceful temerity not only to demand a large sum of money but even the innocent heads of his distinguished

English guests as a prize for inevitable surrender. The noble-spirited ruler, finding himself hopelessly wedged in between Scylla and Charybdis, fully rose to the occasion and, finding all the negotiations fruitless, challenged the heartless rebel to do the worst. The dauntless Maharaja gallantly showed that the treaties of 1804 and 1811 were not merely emergency safety-valves, but were the solemn pledges of the bluest Bundela honour and good faith. In acknowledging this heroic feat, the Foreign department of the Government of India in its famous despatch No. 257, dated 4th November, 1859 has the following :—

“ The distinguished services of this Chief who not only adhered firmly to his alliance with British Government throughout the rebellion : but rendered active assistance to the Queen’s troops and protected the lives of Her Majesty’s Christian subjects at the imminent and unconcealed peril of his own and to his great loss were on this occasion publicly

acknowledged by the Viceroy and Governor-General.

His Excellency was pleased to call the notice of Commander-in-Chief and of the Assembly to the signal devotion shown by the Maharaja to the Queen's Government in his offer to surrender to the rebels the person of his own son rather than that of a British Agent who was under his protection and His Excellency enjoined all British Officers who might hereafter enter the territory of the Maharaja to remember these services and to render to His Highness the respect and consideration which he so eminently deserves."

A few days after Tantiya had made the gruesome determination to force the Raja's hands to extremes, ominous news filtered from Jhansi about the tragic end of disloyal machinisations which he was marching to subsidize. Negotiations were forthwith begun wherein the intense loyalty of the Maharaja to the British Throne most successfully matched the insistent demands of Tantiya to

surrender the English officers, for the rebel captain was disillusioned with assertions that the asked for captives were merely the pet creature of his misguided imagination. The brave Raja sent his only son to the rebel camp as a further proof of his good faith—accompanied by Diwan Hindoopat, K. Kamod Singh and the Chief Minister. A sum of Rupees 3 lacs had to be paid ; and the rebels—after tarrying a while decamped. Mr. Carne, in the garb of a Bundela Thakur—safely started for Panna.

But Tantiya's stars had irretrievably sunk, and he was overwhelmed and completely routed by a detachment of an English regiment at Mowhar Ghat. Thus at last, the resourceful and much-advertised tyrant who would have felt no compunction and heart-searching at the commission of the darkest treason on the lives of a few distracted Englishmen and other loyal elements had to taste the bitter cup of the organized discipline and bravery of his bitterest foes in the open field.

As you sow, so you will reap.

The volcanic eruptions of the Sepoy-Mutiny having subsided, 'Clemency' Canning held a Darbar at Cawnpore (December 1857) to reward fidelity and to reassure the country that while the Gracious Queen—acting with the full consent of Lord Beconsfield, the then prime-minister of England, had no intention to be vindictive towards the misguided masses, their ring-leaders would bear the full brunt of the English justice. Scientific operation—and not a stupid amputation, was fortunately decided on as the guiding acme of the English policy.


The Maharaja's bonafides were rewarded by a valuable Khilat and a sword, the right of adoption, salute of 11 guns, and a Jagir to the value of Rs. 20,000. On his return to the Capital, the Raja held a 'vasanta-darbar' (वसन्त-दरबार) where he distributed suitable presents to his Sirdars. Unfortunately he was not destined for long to shape the future destiny of his restored fortune and internal

tranquility under the saintly inspiration of Dr. J. P. Stratton—the then Political-Agent of Bundelkhand; for he was suddenly taken ill and a few months after breathed his last (1860) to the great sorrow of his loving subjects.

CHAPTER IV

MAHARAJA JAI SINGH

(1860—80)

FTER the sudden demise of Maharaja Ratan Singh, the tender years of his son and successor promised a long term of regency. The Queen-dowager—Rani Bakhat Kunwar Ju, was, therefore, called upon to discharge the onerous functions of a Regent in harmony with Moulvi Siraj Hussain and Diwan Anna Saheb Gore—ministers of the late chief. But two years after (1862), the exigency of growing complications demanded a more experienced as well as a more capable administrator who was soon found in the person of Colonel Thomson. The energetic officer made some trenchant changes in the personnel of the staff and raised the general tone and efficiency of the administration to a remarkable degree. In the same year (1862),

MAHARAJA JAI SINGH

a new sanad was granted to the state which confirmed the privileges of adoption granted at the Cawnpore Darbar of 1859. In 1866, however, the gallant colonel was withdrawn, and the state administration was entirely left into the hands of the old Diwan Anna. The Diwan's death, in the next year, brought his more capable and energetic son—Diwan Tantiya, to the fore-front who guided the affairs of the state for a period of seven years.

Alexander is said to have compressed into 13 years the energies of many life-times but it was extremely difficult even for him to satisfy the average mind of the Hellenic cities. While he was busily engaged in breaking up the barriers between the east and the west in order to obliterate, if possible, the ever-recurring "Eternal question", his compatriots of the 'Synendrion of Cornith' were looking towards him with a feeling of suspicion and awe. A hasty glance at the contemporary records of the times shows that the world-conqueror was an eye-sore to the Greeks whose precious civiliza-

tion and immortal fame were being firmly planted by the Macedonian conqueror in hostile lands and inhospitable climes. A close and impartial study into human psychology compels us to admit that it was perhaps inevitable, for how could an average mind unfold the glorious panorama which posterity alone would be able to dissect and admire.

But the true and faithful guide may not be an idealist drolling out abstruse panaceas before the unscientific and sentimental masses. Plato's 'Republic' is good for a cozy Academy for it only reflects the 'ideas' of the times, and is a pure and simple fabrication of the philosopher's soaring genius. A simple and practical hint of a man of business in the realm of administration generally turns out to be more useful than all the hyperboles of philosophic conundrums.

Diwan Tantiya was wise and experienced but he unfortunately fell into the common mistake of compressing the work of many

years without expecting the natural after-effects consequent upon his all-absorbing interest in forcing the progressive wheels of the state to the point of breakage. Prejudices and ideas, however conservative and out-of-date can not be removed in a day; and a wise statesman should always think twice before assuming the role of a dreamy idealist. This partly explains the coolness which sprang between the able Diwan and the young Maharaja—an episode that has sometimes been treated most light-heartedly to the credit or discredit of one party or the other, generally in the light of subsequent events. A network of roads, the excavation of Jai Sagar, the erection of buildings for a High School and a hospital and many other similar works of public utility, were the glorious outcome of the Diwan's administration; but they naturally entailed a heavy drain upon the state treasury which was woefully misinterpreted by the everready talemongers to the young ruler.

Early in 1874, Maharaja Jai Singh repaired to attend the Viceroy's Darbar at Agra. A few months after, he was invested with full administrative powers on 24th July 1874. A grand Darbar was held where the Political Agent invested the Maharaja with a Khilat and a sword on behalf of the Government, and a salute of investiture was fired. Diwan Tantiya retired from the state-service and many other significant changes were effected in the official cadre.

An impressionable and young ruler, suddenly called upon to shoulder the immense responsibilities of a 'pater primus', often finds many sorts of temptations to beguile him from the right track, and perhaps none is more effective and more dangerous than the complete absorption in harmful society—charming the young mind with the visions of a dreamland. Life begins to appear a garden full of roseate hopes and all sorts of imaginable enjoyments, which the voice of flattery accentuates by stuffing the young

mind with all sorts of chimerical scenes. The chemical compound, generated from such dangerous and harmful recipes, automatically results in creating deep-rooted tastes towards debauchery, drunkenness or disloyalty to the suzerain; and at last when it is too late, the hopeful aspirant finds to his great sorrow that it was merely a house of cards and his councillors the evil genius of his concluding miserable plight. Alas! how many blossoms have faded on the trunk, and how many young rulers who would have been the honour and pride of the age they lived in, suffered themselves to be indulgently exploited and unintentionally ruined at the hands of some of the so-called bosom friends of their childhood and the fair-weather cronies of their Golden days.

Maharaja Jai Singh was a well educated youth of charming personality and austere morals. Above all, he was a man of determination and was fully equipped with all the necessary paraphernalia of a progressive ruler.

During his short reign, persons accused of immorality and other heinous crimes were summarily dealt with in exemplary fashion which created a wholesome influence in the minds of his subjects. But it was his signal misfortune that he had imbibed some suspicions towards the political-agent on the question of the 'Tantiya' controversy. The growing estrangement between the Raja and the indulgent political agent was sedulously fanned by his 'जो हुक्म' boon-companions, till on the occasion of the Imperial assemblage, held on the 1st January 1877; the Raja had the temerity to leave the beaten track of traditional loyalty only to find himself thoroughly duped and his dreamy visions scattered to pieces before the hard actualities of subsequent events.

At first he received at the assemblage a Khilat, a banner, a sword, the title of 'Sipahdarulmulk', and a gold medal. The next time that he attended the auspicious gathering, he was late and had more sirdars

with him than had at first been arranged. Having been reminded of these irregularities, he became furious and entered the place only to find his seat occupied by the Maharaja of Panna. The Raja lost all selfcontrol, and returned to his camp only to return all his insignia of Royal favours recently granted to him in the Darbar. At once he decamped to Vrindaban after declaring that he would resign the Raj.

For three years, he remained at Vrindaban and the mismanagement of the state during his absence assumed a most aggravating and callous situation. All remonstrations from the higher authorities fell flat upon his ears. In October 1879, Captain Maitland (afterwards known as Lord Landerdale) was appointed the Superintendent of the State. On March 1st, 1880; a public Darbar was held and the political agent read a paper to the following effect:—

“ That the Maharaja has been absent for

3 years at Vrindaban from his state against the wishes of the Government; that affairs here through his neglect have gone wrong, that the government has made him the Political agent and Superintendent of the State; and that the Maharaja would have no powers over it until further order."

At Vrindaban, the Maharaja's favourites dropped one by one to his great sorrow and bewilderment; for they had by now made themselves the necessary leverage of his own earthly existence. Unable to prolong his life any more, the Raja committed suicide in the temple of Shiva by eating poisonous fruits which were appropriated by some Hindoo devotees to propitiate the God according to the religious custom on शिवरात्रि. On the 10th March 1880, Maharaja Jai Singh breathed his last. The funeral was performed and the whole party returned to Charkhari.


CHAPTER V

MAHARAJA MALKHAN SINGH

(1880—1908)

“ What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night;
It was pity, Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth
And lose you quite ”

R. HERRICK

 HE Dowager Maharani adopted a prince of a collateral branch of the family of Maharaja Jagat Rajin the person of Maharaja—Malkhan Singh Ju Deo. The child is the father of man and the young Maharaja began to show the happy premonitions of those blessed qualities which completely enthroned him in the hearts of his prosperous and loving subjects. The state

administration was entrusted into the hands of a special political officer deputed by the British Government. In August 1880, a Grand Darbar was held, when the Queen-mother was pleased to grant the title of 'Rao Saheb' to the young Maharaja's father and that of 'Diwan' to the latter's younger brother. The appointment of a tutor to the young Maharaja completed all the immediate arrangements consequent upon the new changes in state affairs.

In February 1882, the Hon'ble Sir Lepel Griffin—the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, visited Charkhari and was very much pleased with the general progress made by the young Maharaja under his able Atalik. Early in 1883, a small colony, to be known as Maitlandganj was consecrated after the name of Major-Maitland, better known to posterity as Lord Lauderdale whose honesty, loyalty, and the singleness of aim in discharging onerous duties at the most critical junctures required a befitting earthly monu-

ment to stand as a silent witness for ages as a proof—if any proof were needed, of the admirable sacrifice made by that gallant officer in the cause of the general development of the state.

The foundation-stone of Gobardhan Nath Fair was laid on October 31st, 1883. Since then, the fair has enormously expanded in its dimensions as well as its duration, and attracts thousands of visitors and innumerable shopkeepers from the surrounding districts. In point of grandeur and magnificence, it yields to none in the adjoining states of Bundelkhand. Its economic utility is no less remarkable, for it serves as a distributing centre of all those amenities of modern life which the rural agriculturist of the interior parts can not produce, but which he can not do without.

In January 1884, His Highness went to Calcutta to see the famous 'International Exhibition', and had a Darbar with His Excellency Lord Ripon. Two years after, the special officer was withdrawn from Charkhari,

and the state was again placed under the political agent in Bundelkhand—Rao Bahadur Jujhar Singh Ju Deo being put at the head of state administration. In 1892, the Maharaja was granted partial administrative powers; but in 1894, His Highness was vested with full plenary powers by the Government of India. The veteran Rao Bhahadur shouldered the immense responsibilities of the chief-minister. Every department in the state felt the vigorous and healthy impulse of a new life, and the young ruler soon became the sinecure of admiring eyes. A ruler is always blessed, but a good ruler is twice blessed, is a maxim which merits no contradiction.

‘Famine’—as said by Sir Harcourt Butler, ‘lies broad-written across the pages of the Indian History’. In a rural country like India, it inflicts terrible hardships upon those poor peasants who often live from hand to mouth. It seriously dislocates the business and often produces a most serious strain

on the shoulders of a ruler. In Mauryan and Moghal days, unstinted charity and generous impulse on the part of the ruler battled hard to mitigate its bewildering and crushing impact. But the introduction of cheap and easy communications in modern times has considerably facilitated the task of present rulers. In spite of all the resources of a modern scientific world, a great deal of resultant misery and hardship often puts a heavy and woeful premium on the responsibilities of the rulers. The new administration in the state was unfortunately beset by a pest of this very nature. The severe famine of 1897—98 was combated by the energetic Maharaja with the greatest energy and tact. The wide-open doors of the state treasury served as a constant asylum to the poor and needy, and relief was administered to the distressed in all its possible forms. In 1902, His Highness was created a K. C. I. E., and in the following year attended the Imperial Darbar at Delhi. He was also


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present at Indore in 1905 when their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and the Princess of Wales, graced the occasion by their auspicious presence. In June 1908, at the young age of 49, to the great sorrow and bewilderment of his admiring subjects, Maharaja Malkhan Singh passed away. A man so energetic, robust, and sound in constitution to all outward appearances, his sudden and untimely end provoked searching questions and talk amongst his loving subjects. No one had ever taken the interests of the people so much to heart and his generosity at all times to rich and poor alike marked him as a chief who understood fully that his mission in life was to brighten the lives of the people who had been entrusted to his care and keeping. Maharaja Malkhan Singh will go down to history as a ruler of exceptional qualities and one whose example many others would do well to follow.

CHAPTER VI

MAHARAJA JUJHAR SINGH

(1908—1914)

T the evening of his life, the cruel hands of death gave a stunning blow to the old experienced charioteer who, for the sake his only son—the late Maharaja, had never hesitated to place his ripe experience and sound advice at the fullest disposal of his renowned off spring. The crushing grief completely prostrated him, and it appeared to all appearances that even the so called charms of kingship would not be able to fill the void rendered vacant by the untimely disappearance of his dearest darling. But time heals away all our sorrows which no amount of friendly and well meaning persuasions can ever achieve. Personal inclinations do not count where the clarion call of duty demands supreme sacrifice and invites a ruler, however

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unwilling, to shoulder the great responsibilities and prove true to the high expectations of his admiring subjects. For.

Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way
But to act that each to-morrow
Finds us further than to-day


The solid, though *unostentatious*, work during this short reign sometimes seriously stands in danger of being completely eclipsed by the dazzling achievements of his great son, but to a patient observer believing in the truth of 'those also serve, who only stand and wait' his foundation of Rainpur Mandi—which is a great commercial and agricultural asset to the state even to-day, and the planning of another mart at Jujharnagar which could not be completed on account of his approaching death were shrewd strokes of constructive statesmanship. Diwan (afterwards Maharaja) Ganga Singh Ju Deo, and Mir (afterwards Khan Bahadur) Ashghar

Ali worked as joint diwans during this short period, and acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of the Maharaja. In honour of the then political agent who had invested the Maharaja with powers, a colony—known as Jardine Ganj with a temple and well—was founded to testify the co-ordial relations existing between the Darbar and Agency. In 1912, the Maharaja Saheb went to see the famous exhibition at Allahabad and also visited Mathura. But his life's task was over. Loaded with honour and ripened by a long eventful career, the old Maharaja passed away with a calm and graceful serenity (June 1914). His was indeed a career no less remarkable than eventful.

CHAPTER VII

MAHARAJA GANGA SINGH JU DEO

(1914—1920)

 HE new ruler—Maharaja Ganga Singh, was verily a past master in the art of administration. It was his rare and distinguished privilege to serve the state in various capacities during the government of the last two rulers. His accession to the throne in the year 1914 was therefore a most happy occurrence in the history of the state. The veteran Khan Bahadur continued to work as a diwan.

Hardly had the auspicious jocundity over his accession ceremony subsided, when the loud clash of the Great War reverberated throughout the length and breadth of His Majesty's Indian Empire. Ever true to their gallant traditions, the princes and people of the Indian states came forward to offer

their whole-hearted material and moral support in the cause of right and justice. Intoxicated with the Imperialism of the Junker school, the German-Emperor had thrown his challenge before the whole civilized world. Treaties, he regarded, as mere scraps of paper. The English nation was deeply moved by the brutal audacity which turned smiling Belgian hearths into horrible shambles. At the clarion call of our august Sovereign, the whole Empire rose in a body to vindicate the cause of right against might. Indian purses were lavishly placed at the disposal of their beloved sovereign, and a bright galaxy of Indian princes voluntarily took upon themselves to suffer all the rigours and hardships of a terrible war. German diplomacy was thoroughly duped ; for their spies had falsely reported to their Imperial master that in any such emergency, the Indian rulers far from co-operating with their English benefactors, would whole-heartedly welcome the first opportunity to rebel. Indian loyalty is made

up of sterner stuff to be waylaid by such seductive efforts.

Immediately on receipt of the news that war had broken out between Great Britain and Germany; His Highness the Maharaja placed his life, property, and the lives of all servants and dependents at the disposal of the Government. The State contribution towards the different war-funds were as follows:—

	Rs.
(i) The Prince of Wales Fund ..	30,000
(ii) Indian Imperial Relief Fund...	75,000
(iii) St. John Ambulance Associ-	
ation ..	2,170
(iv) Our day Fund ..	11,000
	<hr/>
Total ..	1,18,170

The Maharaja paid Rs. 7,500 for a Motor-Ambulance launch and Rs. 1,000 to the Hamirpur Recruiting fund, and also supplied the Red Cross Fund with 475 kurtas, 225 pyjamas, 55 Razais, 100 hukkas and chilams, 2 maunds country-

tobacco, and one tent and 2 raotis. He also supplied 29 recruits for Labour corps service in France. On the 1st January 1918, he had the great pleasure of receiving a 'Khalita' from His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General, acknowledging the services which were rendered to the Empire in the prosecution of the War in Europe. He was granted a sword of honour by the U. P. Government in recognition of his valuable services in connection with the Hamirpur recruiting and the suppression of brigandage activities which was presented by the Hon'able the A. G. G. in a Darbar held at Charkhari on the 10th November 1919.

The question of a successor and heir next attracted the most serious attentions of the Maharaja. His eldest son (Rao Bhan Pratap Singh Ju Deo) had already been adopted as a successor to the Jagir of Jigni which at present has the distinguished honour of being governed by him. None Gopal Singh — the second son, had been unfortunately cut

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off in the midst of his brilliant career by the cruel hands of death. But in 1919, the anxious heart of the Maharaja was pacified by the adoption of the bright jewel——treasured by the Rao Saheb of Jigni, to illuminate the dark corners of his ebbing career and serve as his chief comfort in his old age. At a Darbar in November 1919, Sir Oswald Bosanquet——the Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, formally acknowledged Raja Bahadur (now Maharaja) Arimardan Singh Ju Deo as the rightful heir to the Charkhari Gaddi. Captain A. Petrie was appointed his tutor and Guardian.

The Maharaja's wishes had been fulfilled; and amidst peace and plenty, he silently passed away (October 1920). His remains, by his own will, found a resting place amongst his near and dear ones in the spacious garden close to Rayanpur temple. The buildings of Sudamapuri testify to the great and intense affection shown to Bhai Bansgopal Sudamaju, and the publication of

Hindi book—known as ‘Radha Krishna Bihar’, is a great tribute to his scholarly and religious tastes.

CHAPTER VIII

MAHARAJA ARIMARDAN SINGH JU DEO

 HERE is Raja Priya Brit, from the rut of the wheels of whose car, old ocean flowed? Where is Raja Prithoo, who regulated the measurement of land? Where is Raja Janak, the father of Sita, the wife of Ram Chandra who considered pain and pleasure equal? Where are Rajas Arjun and Bhim, who were brothers and pledged to assist each other, and conquered eighteen akshohinis. All died in war, have passed away, and nothing respecting them, but the fame of their virtue and great deeds, remains." (Sayings of Maharaja Chhatrasal.)

Born in December 1903, H. H. Maharaja Dhiraj Sipah-darul-mulk Maharaja Arimardan Singh Ju Deo ascended the *masnad* after the lamented death of the old Maharaja. As he had not then finished his 17th year, the

Government of India sanctioned a Council of Regency with Rao Saheb Bhan Pratap Singh Ju Deo of Jigni—the father of the present ruler, as Regent, and Khan-Bahadur Syed Mir Asghar Ali as President of the Council. Colonel A. B. Minchin, C. I. E.—the then political agent of—Bundelkhand, announced this decision in an open *darbar* which was generally hailed with satisfaction. During its tenure of more than four years, the Council did its best to discharge its onerous duties in the best interests of the state and its subjects. The obligations of trusteeship were seldom lost sight of; and every attempt was made by the Regent-in-Council to hand over the thread of administration, when its proper time came, to the young Maharaja in a better and more thriving condition.

The Education of the minor Ruler was supervised by Captain. A. Petrie M. C. who, while His Highness was at Saugor and Ajmer had the unique advantages of being assisted by well-known educationists and seasoned

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administrators. Satisfied by the good progress of the Maharaja Sahab, "the Government of India sanctioned the proposed investiture of His Highness Maharaja Arimardan Singh with full Ruling Powers without any restrictions." The Hon'ble Mr. R. I. R. Glancy C. I. E., C. S. I., I. C. S., Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, during the Investiture darbar on the 6th December 1924, delivered the following speech:—

"Your Highness has succeeded to the gaddi as a minor and you are now to exercise full ruling powers at an age when most young men have little authority indeed. I am sure, you must realise the immense responsibilities which will rest on your shoulders from this day forward. Not only is the reputation of your distinguished family in your hands—the welfare and happiness of nearly two lacs of human beings, depends for the future on your administration and on the conduct of the advisers and officers on whom you rely. I would warn you at this time against

some of the difficulties you will have to encounter. The first difficulty in any matter of administration is to ascertain what are the real facts of a case. *There are always interested persons anxious to acquire credit for themselves, anxious to bring trouble on their enemies, absolutely false and unscrupulous. You may be sure they will always try to misrepresent everything to you. This class is more numerous than at your age you would suppose and they make it very hard indeed to find the truth about any matter.*

Having found the truth—we will suppose a real grievance—the next difficulty is to find the remedy and here again the difficulties are more serious than the amateur statesman understands. You may find that to relieve one class is to inflict a hardship on another that in one way or another what appears the obvious remedy is worse than the disease. *There will be many anxious to see you take the wrong path. Avoid hasty judgments,*

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avoid frequent changes of officers, study your subject long and carefully, experiment—if you must experiment, on the smallest scale, before you take action that may affect the happiness of thousands. Do not believe that the fad of the moment is necessarily the cure for every disease. Above all, beware of flattery—the greatest danger to which the rulers are exposed. There is nothing more insidious than flattery: it appears in all shapes and forms, and very few men in any rank of life can claim that they have not been led astray by flattery.

To begin with, I would advise you to confine yourself to the most elementary questions of administration and to search for the truth:—

- (i) Do your people get enough to eat?
- (ii) Are they protected from Criminals?
- (iii) Are they looked after in sickness?
- (iv) What opportunities of Education are offered by your administration?

If when you are an old man, and I hope you may rule for many years, you can say my people are better fed, better housed, less troubled by crime, healthier, better educated than they were in my father's time, you will have achieved that supreme happiness which only comes from conferring happiness on others.

For the present you are fortunate in being able to turn for advice to your father—Rao Bhan Pratap Singh Ju Deo who as Regent has been the guiding spirit of the Minority-Administration, to Khan Bahadur Asghar Ali, the experienced President of the Council, and to the other members here present. I believe that great credit is due to the Minority-Administration, but I am sure there is still much to be done to advance the prosperity of Charkhari. Your Highness has also been fortunate in having Captain Petrie as a tutor. You have acquired some Administrative and judicial experience as well as knowledge of the inner working of several departments in

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the State. The future is in your hands. I confidently look to your Highness to realize the responsibilities towards your state and people which you are now assuming, and by unflinching loyalty to the British Crown to emulate the traditional example of your forefathers—the past rulers of Charkhari. To this end, we all wish you every success and I am especially directed by His Excellency the Viceroy to convey to your Highness his congratulations and good wishes on this auspicious occasion."

After this pregnant speech was over, His Highness rose to respond to it in the following terms:

"Mr. Glancy, Ladies and Gentlemen! The message from His Excellency the Viceroy which you have just conveyed to me, makes me at once consider that this is no ordinary ceremony which we are carrying out today. The grant of full Ruling Powers in my State arouses in me a feeling of grave

responsibility and I do not enter upon this new Era in my life without giving full consideration to the care and energy which will be required to create beneficial improvements and to add to the happiness of my subjects.

I am most grateful to you, Sir, for the very sound advice you have given me and I cannot show my thanks to you in a better manner than by accepting your advice and trying to make it the goal of my future efforts.

Your reference to the work carried out by the Council of Regency during my minority requires from me my appreciation and thanks. The valuable and lasting improvements carried out under the Regent have, I am sure, deserved kindly reference you make and I feel sure the Regent Saheb will agree with me that our thanks are due to the Agents to the Governor-General and to the Political Agents who have at all times given freely their invaluable wisdom and advice.

The glorious traditions of my Ancestors,

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repeatedly referred to in books of historical interest, rouse in me feeling of pride and envy—pride, that I am able to call them my Ancestors, and envy, that I may not attain the greatness to which they reached. I can, however, give the assurance that following the noble example they have set me, I shall always be ready to place myself and the humble resources of my state at the service of the Empire.

I cannot sufficiently express the joy and deep gratitude which I feel at this auspicious time. I beg you, to convey to His Excellency the Viceroy my heart-felt thanks for the inspiring message he has sent me.

In order that this ceremony may go down in the annals of history as a happy and memorable occasion I will grant the following boons to my subjects :—

(i) the remission of Rs. twenty lakhs equal to the amount of grain distributed to my subjects as 'taqabi' and including Rupees one

lakh for miscellaneous advances from the State.

(ii) The release of certain prisoners undergoing sentence in the jail and the remission of sentences in some cases for good conduct.

I cannot conclude without thanking you Sir!, for the honour you have conferred on me to-day. This is your first visit to Char-khari and I welcome you most heartily. Let me add, however, that I should be delighted if you will honour me with a visit when you tour Bundelkhand next year.

I thank you all."

Since then only more than two years and half have passed away, and so it is too early to crystalize the day-to-day happenings from a detached point of view. His Highness may be fully alive that, situated as the Indian States are to-day, their great future task is to bring their subjects on lines with those in adjoining British provinces and thereby fulfilling the solemn obligations which their Suzerain

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Master naturally expects as a result of peace and stability guaranteed to them. This State, in common with others, has her own administrative, social, material, economic, educational, and moral problems which may amply call forth tact, sympathy, statesmanship, and farsightedness of those concerned; but with the young Maharaja at its head, Colonel W. G. Wilson as a political agent and a cool-headed diplomat, and Diwan Bahadur Munshi Roshan Lall B. A., an old experienced hand at the helm of the administration, the State's future need cause little misgivings.

THE TRUE POSITION OF A PRINCE IN SOCIETY

Lord Reading's Viceroyalty, be it clearly understood, will always be rightly regarded as a landmark in the constitutional setting of Indian States. For good or for ill, His Excellency has definitely given a clear ruling defining the prerogatives and obligations of native princes. Well it can not be gainsaid that these regal relics of a great historical past form a component part in that social order of great stabilising consequence which had once weathered the roughest gales, but is now tranquilly sailing in the calm and transparent waters of British statesmanship assuring the continuance of true and solid progress. The prince is always a centre of universal attraction, commands considerable patronage, and is the chief pivot round which all healthy and progressive currents naturally revolve. He

THE TRUE POSITION OF A PRINCE IN SOCIETY

it is who truly represents the "volonte gent-
rale" of Rousseau where the true interests
of the ruler and the ruled are thoroughly
coterminous. His chief claim to government
existing for the general purposes of action,
acquisition, and self-development, lies not
in any contract real or imaginary, but in the
growing prosperity and contentment of the
governed. He never attempts to hide him-
self behind the "Patriarcha" of Sir Robert
Filmer or the divine origin of Kingship, but
like a true shepherd of his people, plays his
'pater primus inter pares' always, keeping in
mind the great constitutional issue that
rights, in order to be true and inalienable,
must be accompanied by supplementary duties;
for there can be no privileges without obli-
gations.

Working on this thesis, it becomes
absolutely clear that the prince in order to
prove himself worthy of a true ruler, must
clothe himself with all the parliamentary

apparels of a constitutional monarch. . The elected representatives of a well-governed state have fewer temptations to put their royal benefactor in the wrong than a hopeless band of crooked sycophants whose very existence demands the full play of all debasing and selfish tactics. On the other hand, the prince too has always his finger on the public pulse, being no more made to move in an artificial glassy world full of thorns and brambles. The system of personal rule where the whims and caprices of an individual count for much, naturally attracts a horde of worthless self-seekers who, after patiently studying the alpha and omega of the whole situation, begin to torment the unsuspecting and good-natured prince with all their skilfully-planned and thoroughly co-ordinated wiles. The ruler mostly unconscious and unaddicted to these despicable and torpedoing tactics, for the time being, bites and snarls, but at last, after a heroic struggle, often succumbs to the inevitable before a wolfish band of well-tutored

THE TRUE POSITION OF A PRINCE IN SOCIETY
self-seekers. Sometimes fortunately, by luck or
chance, he gets the better of them and, realiz-
ing his grave responsibilities both in his own
true interests and that of his dear subjects,
shakes off his indulgence to the extent of
punishing the vagrant and rewarding the faith-
ful. The intelligent and loyal band of officials,
assisted by the elected spokesmen of popular
will, materializes his good and grand intentions
into beneficial acts and thereby spreads the
sweet incense of his solid fame in the four
corners of the country to the mutual happiness
and prosperity of the state and its subjects.
Constitutional administration therefore
seems to be the best solution of all ills with
which some of our states, mostly unconscious-
ly, get themselves infected ; and it will also
serve as the strongest bulwark effectively
checking any subversive effort made by irres-
ponsible and uninformed cheap criticisms. In
this way the ruler is unambiguously inter-
preted to his people and vice-versa.
Father and son witness the magnetic

THE TRUE POSITION OF A PRINCE IN SOCIETY
charm of one another, and the vice of wilful
hypocrisy or manufactured calumny is doomed
to be hushed for ever.

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